

## Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 177124

NODIS

FOR MOOSE

FOL RPT NOUAKCHOTT 1906 ACTION SECSTATE 12 JUL 78 QUOTE

S E C R E T NOUAKCHOTT 1906

NODIS

DEPARTMENT PASS TO OTHER ADDRESSEES AS APPROPRIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PEPR, MR, AG, MO, SS

SUBJ: NEW MAURITANIAN REGIME'S FIRST OVERTURE TO THE USG

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 1873

1. SUMMARY: ACTING THROUGH ISMAEL OULD AMAR OF SNIM, THE NEW MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT HAS REQUESTED USG ASSISTANCE IN (A) CONVINCING THE ALGERIANS OF THE GIRM'S FIRM RESOLVE TOWARDS A QUICK, PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE WESTERN SAHARA CONFLICT, AND (B) WORKING WITH THEM AND THE MOROCCANS IN RESOLVING WHAT

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COULD BE INHERENT CONFLICT IN THE GIRM'S TWO ANNOUNCED OBJECTIVES OF PEACE IN THE WESTERN SAHARA AND CONTINUED FRIENDSHIP WITH THE MOROCCANS.

2. ISMAEL OULD AMAR, THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE MAURITANIAN NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL AND MINING COMPANY (SNIM) CALLED ON ME THIS MORNING AT HIS INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE ME WITH HIS VIEWS

ON THE BACKGROUND OF THE COUP AND TO ENLIST USG SUPPORT AND  
- 8 5-;3. HIS ACCOUNT OF THE BACKGROUND TO AND THE  
MODALITIES OF THE COUP AND THE MAKE-UP OF NEW GOVERNMENT  
WILL BE INCORPORATED IN A SERIES OF SEPTELS CONVEYING OUR  
ANALYSIS OF WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY AND WHAT TO EXPECT.

3. HE OPENED BY ASKING ME IF PRESIDENT MOUSTAPHA HAD  
CONTACTED ME YET. WHEN I ANSWERED IN THE NEGATIVE HE STATED  
THAT HE KNEW THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS EAGER TO SEE ME AS SOON  
AS POSSIBLE AND THAT I COULD EXPECT TO BE INVITED FOR A  
TALK SOME TIME TODAY. (PRESIDENT SUBSEQUENTLY CONVOKED ME  
AT 1830X JULY 12).

4. AFTER REITERATING NEW REGIME'S COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY,  
FREE ENTERPRISE, AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, AS WELL AS ABSENCE OF  
PHILOSOPHICAL AFFINITY BETWEEN MAURITANIANS AND ALGERIANS,  
AMAR SAID THAT PRESIDENT MOUSTAPHA'S JULY 11 RADIO INTERVIEW  
HAD CONVEYED THE TWO MAJOR IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW  
REGIME VIZ., (A) PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE WESTERN SAHARA  
PROBLEM, AND (B) CONTINUED FRIENDSHIP WITH THE MOROCCANS. I  
NOTED A POSSIBLE INHERENT CONFLICT IN THE PURSUIT OF THESE TWO  
OBJECTIVES. HE AGREED THAT THIS COULD INDEED BE THE CASE.

5. AMAR THEN CAME TO THE PRINCIPAL REASON FOR HIS VISIT. HE  
STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ASKED HIM TO APPROACH ME  
INFORMALLY (BUT NONETHELESS OFFICIALLY) FOR USG HELP IN  
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BRINGING A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE SAHARA CONFLICT. HE HAD

TWO SPECIFIC REQUESTS:

(A) THAT WE USE WHATEVER MEANS POSSIBLE TO ADVISE  
ALGERIANS THAT THE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT HERE IS QUOTE  
NORMALLY GOING TO LEAD TO PEACE, BUT NOT WITHOUT SOME  
DIFFICULTY FOR MAURITANIA. MAURITANIA WILL NEED  
SOME TIME IN THE COMING WEEKS TO PREPARE FOR PEACE (WITH  
THE HELP OF ITS FRIENDS). THEREFORE THERE IS NO NEED FOR  
THE ALGERIANS TO ATTACK WITHIN THE 1960 MAURITANIAN BORDER  
UNQUOTE. (NB: HE EMPHASIZED THE 1960).

(B) THAT WE USE ANY INFLUENCE WE HAVE ON MOROCCANS  
TO CONVINCE THEM THAT THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THE WESTERN  
SAHARA WILL INVOLVE A REFERENDUM AND THAT THERE IS NO  
INTEREST FOR ANY COUNTRY TO CONTINUE THIS UNFORTUNATE CONFLICT.

6. HE THEN WENT ON TO MAKE THE STARTLING OBSERVATION THAT  
NOT ONLY DID MAURITANIA'S ACCESSION OF THE FORMER SPANISH  
SAHARA VIOLATE AN INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLE BUT THAT IT ALSO  
VIOLATED MAURITANIA'S FORMER CONSTITUTION (TITLE I, ARTICLE 7)

WHICH STATES THAT NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY SHALL BE VESTED IN THE PEOPLE WHO SHALL EXERCISE IT THROUGH THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND BY REFERENDUM. IN ESSENCE NO TERRITORY COULD BE TAKEN OR SURRENDERED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS APPROVAL (THROUGH ELECTION OR REFERENDUM) BY OCCUPANTS OF THAT TERRITORY.

7. I TOLD OULD AMAR THAT I WOULD COMMUNICATE HIS REQUEST TO MY GOVERNMENT WITHOUT DELAY. PLEASE PROVIDE COMMENT AND GUIDANCE ASAP.

8. COMMENT: THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON NOT TO BELIEVE THAT OULD AMAR WAS NOT SPEAKING AT THE SPECIFIC BEHEST OF PRESIDENT MOUSTAPHA'S NEW GOVERNMENT. ALSO, STATEMENT IN PARAGRAPH ABOVE INDICATES THAT THIS REGIME IS INDEED SERIOUS  
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ABOUT BREAKING SAHARA IMPASSE AND SEEKING VALID BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION.

9. MAJOR IMPONDERABLE IN SITUATION IS, OF COURSE, MOROCCAN ATTITUDE. AS HAS BEEN REPORTED ELSEWHERE, MOROCCAN DEF AGATION, PROBABLY LED BY PRIME MINISTER OSMAN, APPARENTLY CAME HERE ON JULY 11. AS YET, HOWEVER, WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO FIND OUT WHAT TRANSPIRED DURING THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH NEW MAURITANIAN REGIME. END COMMENT.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. I PLAN TO TAKE SOUNDING WITH MOUSTAPHA DURING MY AUDIENCE LATER TODAY IN ATTEMPT TO ASSURE THAT HE ENDORSES AQJAAK'S POSITION. AS LONG AS MOUSTAPHA DOES NOT REPUDIATE AMAR, I RECOMMEND THAT WE CONVEY LATTER'S MESSAGE TO ALGERIANS.

B. WITH RESPECT TO MESSAGE ON REFERENDUM TO MOROCCANS, MY VIEW IS THAT WE MUST KNOW MORE ABOUT MOROCCAN THINKING AND EXTENT OF MAURITANIAN-MOROCCAN CONTACTS BEFORE BROACHING SUBJECT WITH MOROCCANS. DEPENDING ON WHAT I LEARN FROM MOUSTAPHA THIS EVENING, I RECOMMEND THAT I BE AUTHORIZED TO EXPLORE THESE POINTS FURTHER WITH AMAR.

C. I ALSO RECOMMEND THAT WE MAKE AMAR'S DEMARCHE KNOWN TO THE FRENCH, IN PARIS AND HERE.

KRYZA

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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